



TOWN OF ARLINGTON

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ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Arlington Conservation Commission
Minutes
January 17, 2019

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex. Present were Commission Members Nathaniel Stevens, David White, Curt Connors, Susan Chapnick, Charles Tirone, Mike Nonni, and Pam Heidell; Associate Commissioner Cathy Garnett; and Conservation Agent Emily Sullivan. Also present were Health Compliance Officer Kylee Sullivan, and Jeanne Lukenda and Mel Higgins from Weston & Sampson.

Administrative

12/20/2018 Meeting Minutes

The Commission discussed edits to the draft minutes. D. White motioned to approve the minutes as edited, C. Connors seconded, all were in favor, motion approved.

01/03/2019 Meeting Minutes

The Commission discussed edits to the draft minutes. S. Chapnick motioned to approve the minutes as edited, P. Heidell seconded, all were in favor, motion approved.

Spy Project Update

E. Sullivan informed the Commission that the Spy Pond Project had gone out to bid, and that a pre-bid site walk occurred 01/15/2019. The request for bids will close on 01/31/2019 and a contractor will be selected in February. Construction will begin in March.

McClennen Park Detention Basins

S. Chapnick presented Alpha Invoice # 489433 to the Commission. The invoice is for soil and water sample analysis and the total invoice cost is \$5,425.00. D. White motioned to approve the invoice, C. Tirone seconded, all were in favor, motioned approved. E. Sullivan will send the approved invoice to Teresa DeBenedictis for payment.

Arlington Great Meadows Annual Report

The Commission discussed the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows 2018 report. S. Chapnick moved to approve the report and to send the report to the Select Board, C. Connors seconded, all were in favor, motioned approved.

Water Bodies Working Group Annual Report

The Commission discussed edits to the draft report. C. Connors moved to approve the report with the discussed revisions and to send the report to the Finance Committee, M. Nonni seconded, all were in favor, motioned approved. D. White asked to review the revised version before it was sent.

Water Bodies Working Group – Warrant Article for Fund Appropriation

The Commission discussed edits to the warrant article to request for fund appropriations. S. Chapnick motioned to adopt the warrant article, P. Heidell seconded, all were in favor, motion approved. D. White volunteered to send it in before the warrant for Spring Town Meeting closes on 01/25/2019.

Floodplain and Inland Wetlands Zoning

N. Stevens updated the Commission on the discussion he had with E. Sullivan and J. Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development, about the floodplain and inland wetlands district zoning revisions. The revisions included updating references to outdated state and local regulations and removing administrative sections from the regulations. The Commission agreed that they are happy to provide technical assistance regarding revisions, but do not want to co-sponsor the revisions.

P. Heidell noted that the language regarding the purpose of inland wetland district in the zoning bylaw differs from the language in the Town Bylaw for Wetlands Protection and provided suggested edits to make the two bylaws consistent. She also noted that the desirability of including the Wetlands Bylaw's language regarding climate change resilience in the zoning bylaw. S. Chapnick noted that the definition of an inland wetland district in the zoning bylaw is inconsistent with definition provided in the Town of Arlington Bylaw for Wetlands Protection (Title V, Article 8), the Commission's Wetland Protection Regulations (Regulations), and the Department of Environmental Protection's 310 CMR 10.00 Wetlands Regulations. Commission members also discussed that both the Floodplain and Inland Wetland District sections should reference review by the Conservation Commission. E. Sullivan will inform J. Raitt of these inconsistencies.

J. Raitt invited N. Stevens and E. Sullivan to attend the 02/11/2019 Arlington Redevelopment Board meeting during which the revisions will be discussed.

Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) Annual Conference

S. Chapnick and N. Stevens will present at the MACC conference on 03/02/2019. The presentation will focus on adding climate change resilience language to local regulations. S. Chapnick asked E. Sullivan to gather all Notices of Intent and Order of Conditions since March 2018, when Arlington added climate change resilience to its local regulations.

E. Sullivan also will present at the MACC conference with Karen Pelto from the MassDEP Natural Resource Damages Program on restoration projects, specifically the Mystic Riverfront Restoration project in Arlington.

Conservation Stewards Fund

The Arlington Land Trust reported the 2018 year-end balance in the Conservation Stewards Fund. The fund received \$345.00 in contributions in 2018. No expenditures were made during 2018. The final account balance is \$5,497.29.

C. Garnett suggested using the funds to sponsor a local project.

Integrated Pest Management

K. Sullivan, the Town's Health Compliance Officer with Health and Human Services discussed the Town's pest management strategy and pest control efforts. The Town recommends an integrated pest management (IPM) strategy, focusing on sanitation and exclusion and pursuing elimination only when necessary. K. Sullivan explained that IPM is an environmentally-friendly and common sense approach to pest control. Climate change impacts, such as warmer winters, have increased the copulation periods for rodents, allowing rodents to breed more often without risk of dying off in a winter freeze. Health and Human Services produced a 5-episode series of rodent control educational videos that are accessible through Arlington Community Media, Inc. (ACMi).

Businesses and schools are required to have an IPM plan. However, K. Sullivan explained that if there is a pre-existing infestation, sanitation and exclusion may not be sufficient and extermination may be necessary. K. Sullivan also explained that common methods of extermination are snap traps and rodenticides. Bait boxes can either contain a snap trap or rodenticide. Rodenticide bait boxes do not contain rodenticide pellets, but rather a rodenticide block containing chemicals fatal to rodents. The rodenticide block is secured to a bar in an internal chamber of a bait box, which has a locked lid and is animal and child tamper-proof. K. Sullivan informed the Commission of the various types of federally approved rodenticides, of which second generation anticoagulants are the most dangerous. S. Chapnick expressed concern over the use of rodenticides. K. Sullivan affirmed the Commission that licensed pest control operators can only use the majority of rodenticides, and that "rat ice" (an EPA approved version of dry ice) is a common practice for rodent control.

S. Chapnick recommended that Health and Human Services give pest control pamphlets to the Department of Public Works when they issue compost bins. Since compost bins are a common source for pest problems, having an information sheet about pest control and best composting practices would benefit the community.

Wellington Park Project Working Group,

Jeanne Lukenda and Mel Higgins presented the Wellington Park project to the Commission. The project includes building a flood storage area (approximately 290 cubic yards of storage), resurfacing and elongating the pathway into the park, and removing invasive species.

The project Notice of Intent will be filed and presented during the 02/07/2019 Commission meeting.

J. Lukenda summarized the history of the Wellington Park project. The project began in 2017 with a park study of pedestrian access, funded by Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds and managed by the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) that included public outreach and public hearings. VHB conducted a study assessing flood control abilities along Mill Brook, and deemed any mitigation efforts futile. During the pedestrian access study, Weston & Sampson conducted their own flood control study, and determined that some flood control was feasible.

MyRWA applied for a second round of CPA funding in 2018 to activate the park and increase access to the brook. In tandem, the Town's Department of Planning and Community Development applied for the State's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant. The Town was selected for the grant to build flood storage capacity along Wellington Park. The CPA #2 grant has been paired with the MVP grant to fund the current park project proposal. The proposal includes both park improvements and flooding improvements.

The flood storage proposed (290 cubic yards) is not major, but may offer a little reduction in flooding along the brook. The project is a pilot project, and can be used as an educational opportunity. The flood storage area is limited by a MWRA sewer easement, the Town's climbing structure, and the existing foot bridge across the brook.

S. Chapnick asked about the proposed weirs, which flank the flood storage area. The weirs will slow down water flow and direct the water into the flood storage area. E. Sullivan noted that there are two debris dams in Mill Brook along the park. E. Sullivan has requested that the debris dams be removed by DPW prior to project construction.

M. Higgins assured the Commission that only 50 linear feet of bank will be impacted, which is less than the 100 foot threshold under the state regulations for a wildlife habitat evaluation (if more than 50 linear feet of bank is altered, a wildlife habitat assessment would be required under the state Wetlands Protection Act). The flood storage area and new channel is roughly the same elevation as brook (brook's elevation is 62-ft, channel's elevation is 61-ft). The inlet into the storage area is high, so as to only allow overflow water into the flood storage area and not flow during normal conditions. Therefore, the storage channel will not always be wet, but it will be dry during normal flow. The channel area will contain vegetation and riprap.

The Commission requested that Weston & Sampson include with the NOI the flow conditions that would cause water to enter the storage channel. The Commission would like to know more information of probable overflow frequency and intensity.

C. Tirone questioned whether the storage channel was actually storage or merely delay. The Commission discussed the definition of flood storage (detention and retention).

The Commission suggested using more vegetation than riprap in the storage channel. The Commission also recommended that Weston & Sampson prepare the NOI under the ecological restoration project provision. The Commission recommended that Weston & Sampson

determine whether this project qualifies as a limited project for pedestrian path in the riverfront area. The Commission also recommended that the NOI adhere to the local vegetation replacement requirements in the Town's wetlands regulations. The Commission requested more clarity on tree removal and replacement in the proposal. The question was also raised how the plantings would affect the soil health. Some issues of concern are permeability, carbon sequestration and habitat value.

C. Tirone requested that Weston & Sampson include a velocity analysis in the NOI. P. Heidell requested that a long-term maintenance plan of the storage channel be included in the NOI. The Commission requested that resource area delineations be added to the NOI plans, including the 200-ft, 100-ft, 50-ft, and 25-ft buffers.

Weston & Sampson agreed to add the geotechnical borings and testings to the NOI.

Meeting adjourned at 9:53pm.

The Conservation Commission's next meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 7:30pm in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Sullivan